

Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04

SSC-01 IO-10 AGR-05 CU-02 PC-01 /099 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9900

INFO DIA WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MORG, HO

SUBJECT: CONTINUING REACTION TO GOH CHANGES

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1686

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE PRESS CONTINUES TO PRINT UNCONFIRMED REPORTS ON THOSE BEING NAMED TO GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. INTEREST IN LOPEZ REMAINS AT A FAIRLY LOW LEVEL AND CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR HAS BEEN QUOTED AS SAYING THAT LOPEZ CANNOT LEAVE THE COUNTRY. NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAH) HAS CALLED FOR THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE AMERICAN FRUIT COMPANIES WITHOUT COMPENSATION. END SUMMARY

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1. EL CRONISTA OF APRIL 26 REPORTED THAT NEW SUPREME COURT JUSTICES AND NEW HEADS OF THE GOH AUTONOMOUS AGENCIES (NATIONAL RAILROAD, FORESTRY CORPORATION, HOUSING INSTITUTE, WATER SERVICE, ETC.) WILL BE NAMED

BY MELGAR THE WEEK OF APRIL 28. EL CRONISTA ALSO QUOTES FONMIN VIRGILIO GALVEZ AS SAYING THAT GOH POLICY ON THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EL SALVADOR REMAINS UNCHANGED.

2. THE HEADLINES OF CONSERVATIVE LA PRENSA'S APRIL 26 EDITION QUOTES MELGAR AS SAYING LOPEZ CANNOT LEAVE THE COUNTRY. LA PRENSA'S RELATED INNER PAGE STORY REFERS TO A REPORTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION'S COORDINATOR, JORGE ARTURO REINA ON APRIL 25 IN WASHINGTON. LA PRENSA REPORTED THAT REINA SAID HE HAD TALKED TO MELGAR ABOUT THE RUMORS OF LOPEZ' DEPARTURE AND THAT HE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM THE CHIEF OF STATE THAT LOPEZ WAS STILL IN HONDURAS. REINA REITERATED THE COMMISSION'S INSISTENCE THAT NO ONE CONNECTED TO THE BANANA COMMISSION OR NEGOTIATIONS WITH UB BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION AND ADDED THAT HE INTENDED TO MAKE A PUBLIC REPORT OF THE GROUP'S U.S. FINDINGS UPON RETURN TO THE COUNTRY.

3. LA PRENSA'S LEAD EDITORIAL OF APRIL 26 WAS ENTITLED, "UNITY, THE BASIS OF SUCCESS," AND CALLED UPON THE COUNTRY AND THE MILITARY TO UNITE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MELGAR.

4. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES (LIBERAL AND NATIONALIST) AND SOME PRIVATE GROUPS (E.G., COHEP) CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THE THESIS THAT THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT OF COLONEL MELGAR IS MERELY A TRANSITIONAL STEP ON THE ROAD TO A "NORMAL" CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED BY LIBERAL TIEMPO APRIL 26, LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENT JOSE PINEDA GOMEZ REFUSED SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ON THE NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS BECAUSE, ACCORDING TO HIM, THEY ARE ONLY HOLDING THEIR POSITIONS DURING THE TRANSITION TO A CONSYITUTIONAL REGIME. THE PARTIES APPARENTLY ARE HOPING TO CREATE A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHESY BUT NO ONE WITHIN THE MILITARY HAS RISEN TO THE BAIT. THE ONLY MENTION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT
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MENT HAS BEEN A VAGUE STATEMENT IN THE DECLARATION DEPOSING LOPEZ. NO ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT HAS SPECIFICALLY DISCUSSED A TIME-TABLE FOR THE REESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS.

5. LA PRENSA ALSO REPORTED THAT COLONEL OMAR ANTONIO ZELAYA REYES HAS BEEN NAMED TO REPLACE POLICARPO PAZ AS CHIEF OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES (FSP).

6. EL DIA OF APRIL 26 HEADLINED A LATIN PRESS STORY DATEDINED SAN SALVADOR THAT REPORTED THAT MELGAR HAS ALREADY HAD SEVERAL TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH SALVADORAN PRESIDENT ARMANDO MOLINA AND THAT THE TWO PLAN A BORDER MEETING SOON. EL DIA'S EDITIRIAL

PRESENTS THE VIEW THAT THE PEOPLE ARE SATISFIED WITH THE NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THAT THE MINISTERS ARE, FOR THE MOST PART, POLITICAL CENTRISTS.

7. ALSO APPEARING ON EL DIA'S EDITORIAL PAGE IS A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS BY LEFTIST VICTOR MEZA WHO IS THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SECRETARY OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION. MEZA SAYS THAT THE MINISTERS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FROM AMONG THE MOST CONSERVATIVE MEN IN THE COUNTRY AND THAT THEY ARE INCOMPETENT. HE ADDS THAT THEY WERE INTENDED TO SERVE ONLY TEMPORARILY. MEZA SAYS, " THE NEW CABINET (COUNCIL OF MINISTERS) CANNOT BE INTERESTED IN PROMOTING SOCIAL CHANGE IN THIS COUNTRY, IN FIRST PLACE BECAUSE THEY DO NOT WANT IT AND SECONDLY, EVEN IF THEY WANTED IT, THEY ARE NOT CAPABLE OF IT... THE COUNTRY," CONCLUDES MEZA, "PARTICULARLY IN THESE TIMES OF NATIONAL TRAGEDY, DESERVES BETTER."

8. LA PRENSA'S LEAD EDITORIAL OF APRIL 27 ONCE AGAIN EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT DURING THE REGIME OF GENERAL LOPEZ THE CHIEF OF STATE HAD REFUSED TO CONSULT WITH THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF SOCIETY. LA PRENSA EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE REMARKS OF MELGAR AND VARIOUS MINISTERS THAT INDICATED THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL NOW HAVE ACCESS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

9. LA PRENSA ALSO REPORTED THAT BENJAMIN VILLANUEVA WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE HONDURAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE.

10. LA PRENSA OF APRIL 28 REPORTED THAT ALBERTO
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GALEANO MADRID HAS BEEN NAMED AS THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE HONDURAN SUPREME COURT. GALEANO IS NOW HEAD OF THE GOH CENTRAL BANK. LA PRENSA FURTHER RE-PORTED THAT ARMANDO AGUILUZ, ALEJANDRO LOPEZ CANTARERO, EFRAIN MAJIA NOLASCO, EFRAIN MONCADA SILVA, JUSTIANO VASQUEZ AND ALVARO RAUL MATUTE C. HAVE ALSO BEEN NAMED TO THE COURT. THE DISMISSED JUSTICES ARE ROBERT RAMIREZ (COURT PRESIDENT), ROGELIO MARTINEZ AGUSTINUS, PEDRO PASCUAL TORRES, JERONIMO SANDOVAL AND PEDRO PINEDA MADRID. LA PRENSA ALSO STATES THAT GUILLERMO BUESO (ALSO REPORTEDLY NAMED AS ADVISOR TO MELGAR) HAD BEEN NAMED TO REPLACE GALEANO MADRID AT THE CENTRAL BANK. NONE OF THESE APPOINTMENTS HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED.

11. LIBERAL TIEMPO OF APRIL 28 PUBLISHED AN APRIL 25 DECLARATION BY THE CONCIL OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF HONDURAS (UNAH) ON THE CURRENT SCANDAL. THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL IS THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY IN THE SCHOOL'S STRUCTURE. THE POINTS OF THE DECLARATION, SIGNED BY ACTING RECTOR MARCO VIRGILIO CARIAS, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. REQUIRE THAT THE GOVERNMENT CLARIFY THE BRIBERY EPISODE
AND IDENTIFY THOSE GUILTY;
B. SUPPORT FULLY THE UNIVERSITY RECTOR (JORGE ARTURO REINA-
COORDINATOR OF THE GOH INVESTIGATING COMMISSION) IN HIS
ROLE ON THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION;
C. SUPPORT AND ASSIST TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE
THE UNION OF THE WORKERS OF THE STANDARD FRUIT
COMPANY (SUTRAFSCO) IN ITS PATRIOTIC BATTLE FOR THE
COMPANY'S NATIONALIZATION; AND
D. PROPOSE TO THE WORKER ANC CAMPESINO CLASS ORGANIZA-
TIONS, AS WELL AS TO THE SECONDARY AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS,
THE FORMATION OF A UNITED FRONT TO FIGHT FOR THE COMPLETE
NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANANA COMPANIES WITHOUT COMPENSA-
TION.

12. IN THE BODY OF ITS DECLARATION THE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL ALSO SAID, "THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR DECLARED
THAT HIS COUNTRY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE AFFAIR AND
ASSURED US THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT INTERVENE IN
FAVOR OF THE BANANA COMPANIES. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, IN
THE STYLE OF PONTIUS PILATE, IN THIS FORM WASHES ITS
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HANDS, FORGETTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IN FACT
INTERVENED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE
COMPANIES BY PRESSURING THE GOVERNMENT OF DR. RAMON
VILLEDA MORALES TO CHANGE THE ARTICLES OF THE AGRARIAN
REFORM LAW THAT WERE PREJUDICIAL TO THE INTEREST OF THE
BANANA COMPANIES."

SANCHEZ

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